

## Oscar Powell Selected as “Extra Mile” Award Winner

Working nights and weekends is an assignment few would volunteer for. However, when displaced Hurricane Katrina evacuees needed help last September, Senior Medicaid Eligibility Specialist Oscar Powell not only stepped in to take Medicaid applications after hours, but assisted evacuees in search of housing and other needed resources as well.

Mr. Powell’s desire to put others’ needs above his own and go beyond the average work day to help people in need were among the reasons cited for his recognition as the winner of the Alabama Medicaid Agency’s “Extra Mile” Award for April - June 2006.



**Oscar Powell, center, with Luann McQueen, Director of the E & D Certification Division and Jim Jones, Southern Regional Supervisor**

The “Extra Mile” Award is given quarterly to an outstanding Medicaid employee who has gone beyond his/her assigned job duties. Nominated by a supervisor or co-workers, the recipient is chosen through a selection committee of Agency employees.

When volunteers were needed to help displaced Hurricane Katrina evacuees last September, Mr. Powell volunteered to represent the Agency at the Fairhope and Daphne Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). Later, when a DRC was opened during a weekend at the Mobile Civic Center, Mr. Powell again volunteered to help on short notice. At the DRC, Mr. Powell not only took applications for Medicaid, but also helped storm survivors find housing, shelters, living assistance and work locations.

“Oscar was truly concerned about his friends and neighbors in the Mobile area and never was concerned that he might be personally inconvenienced by doing more work or working on a weekend to get the job done,” said Jim Jones, Southern Regional Supervisor of the Elderly and Disabled Certification Division, who nominated Mr. Powell for the award.

Mr. Powell’s work after Hurricane Katrina was not the first time that he has touched the lives of others. On a rainy election day in 2004, he helped to rescue two people trapped in an overturned car while on his way to work, Mr. Jones said.

“His attitude and work ethic is the same whether it is the everyday work in the District Office or responding to a major disaster,” Mr. Jones said.

A graduate of the University of South Alabama with a dual degree in sociology and criminal justice, Mr. Powell began work with the state in 1979 where he worked for the Department of

Human Resources before joining Medicaid in 1991. He has worked in the Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Certification Division since March 2003, where his duties involve reviewing E&D Program cases and waivers (Nursing Home, Hospital, Widow/widower, Continuous and Retroactive Medicaid, Medicaid for Disabled and Adult Children), and making awards for the E&D and Homebound Waivers at the Mobile District Office.

A resident of Mobile, Mr. Powell will celebrate 27 years of marriage to his wife, Anne, in July. He is the proud father of two adult sons, Robert Christian Powell, singer and songwriter for Mobile-based band Peek, and U.S. Army soldier, PFC Kent Allen Powell.

In his spare time, Mr. Powell exercises, scuba dives, and contributes his time as an umpire for the local high schools.